REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 9, 12 and 29 have been amended. Claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-11, 13-14 and 30-33 have been cancelled.

The Examiner has objected to applicant's FIG. 13 under MPEP §608.02(g) as failing to designate FIG. 13 as "Prior Art." Applicant has amended applicant's FIG. 13 to add a legend "Prior Art" as suggested by the Examiner, thereby obviating the Examiner's objection.

The Examiner has rejected applicant's claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Sasaki, et al. (US 5,581,298) patent in view of the Suzuki (US 5,568,195) patent in further view of the Uomori, et al. (US 4,903,121) patent.

Applicant has cancelled applicant's claims 2-4 and 6-8, thereby obviating the Examiner's rejection with respect to these claims. Applicant has amended applicant's independent claims 1 and 5 and with respect to such claims, as amended, and their respective dependent claims, the Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

More particularly, applicant's independent claims 1 and 5 have been amended to better define applicant's invention. Specifically, applicant's independent claim 1 has now been amended to recite a suppression circuit provided between a color interpolation circuit and a color-difference signal forming circuit, which suppresses a plurality of color signals generated by the interpolation circuit, if a level of a luminance signal is out of a predetermined range. Applicant's independent claim 5 has been similarly amended. Such constructions are not taught or suggested by the cited art of record.

The Examiner has acknowledged that the Sasaki, et al. patent does not teach the use of a suppression circuit for suppressing RGB signals generated by an interpolation circuit. The

Examiner has, however, argued that the Suzuki patent discloses a suppression circuit (clip circuit 13) for suppressing a plurality of color signals generated if a level of luminance is not lower than a first predetermined level and/or is lower than a second predetermined level and that it is advantageous to place the clipper before a white balance calculation is performed so that the high and low values are not included in a white balance calculation. The Examiner has also acknowledged that the Suzuki patent does not teach the use of a suppression circuit that can be implemented before a color difference matrix, but has argued that the Uomori, et al. patent discloses such feature.

The Examiner has thus acknowledged that neither the Sasaki, et al. patent nor the Suzuki patent teaches or suggests a suppression circuit provided between a color interpolation circuit and a color-difference signal forming circuit. Applicant submits, moreover, that the Uomori, et al. patent likewise fails to teach or suggest a suppression circuit provided between a color interpolation circuit and a color difference signal forming circuit. Additionally, the Uomori, et al. patent, does not teach or suggest a suppression circuit which suppresses color signals generated, if a level of a luminance signal is out of a predetermined range.

In particular, the Uomori, et al. patent shows in FIG. 6, a clipper 19 which precedes a color operation circuit and which is responsive to a color temperature-clip level converter. Accordingly, even if the Uomori, et al. patent were viewed with the Sasaki, et al. and the Suzuki patents the combination of patents would still not teach or suggest a suppression circuit provided between a color interpolation circuit and a color-difference signal forming circuit, which suppresses a plurality of color signals generated by the interpolation circuit, if a level of a luminance signal is out of a predetermined range.

Moreover, the Examiner's attempt to combine the Uomori, et al. patent with the Sasaki, et

al. and the Suzuki patents is believed without merit, since the clipper 19 in the Uomori, et al. patent is responsive to color temperature and, therefore, differs from the clip circuit 13 in the Suzuki patent which is responsive to the luminance of the external light. The references thus are markedly different and, accordingly, a skilled artisan would not have been motivated to combine the references, as the Examiner has proposed. The Examiner's rejection based on the combination of references should thus be withdrawn for this reason as well.

The Examiner has further rejected applicant's claims 29-33 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Uomori, et al. patent. Applicant has cancelled applicant's claims 30-33 and with respect to such claims, the Examiner's rejection is therefore obviated. With respect to amended claim 29, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant's amended independent claim 29 recites a signal processing apparatus which processes a signal outputted from an image pickup element having filters arranged to use plural kinds of colors. A color-suppression circuit, provided for primary color signals or complementary color signals obtained from said image pickup element, color-suppresses the primary color signals or complementary color signals in accordance with the level of luminance signal. A color signal processing circuit processes the output from the suppression circuit.

As above-stated, in the cited Uomori, et al. patent the clipper 19 precedes the color operation circuit and is responsive to a color temperature-clip level converter. Thus, the Uomori, et al. patent fails to teach or suggest a color suppression circuit for color-suppressing primary color signals or complementary color signals from the image pickup element in accordance with the level of luminance signal. Applicant's amended independent claim 29 which recites such a circuit thus patentably distinguishes over the Uomori, et al. patent.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicant's claims, as amended,

patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

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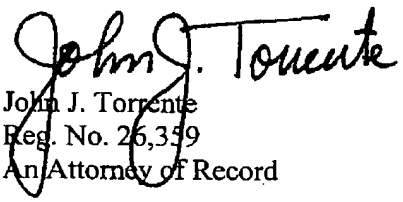
Respectfully submitted,



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